



2023

TASTING REPORT





# About

## Top Five Trust

Top Five Trust is a registered public benefit organisation, reference number 930068246.

The exclusive object of the trust is the advancement, preservation and promotion of the arts, culture and customs associated with oenology and viticulture in the Republic of South Africa in a non-profit manner, with altruistic or philanthropic intent.

The trust focuses its resources on lifting the profile of South African Pinot Noir for the benefit of the public.

To achieve its objective, the trust organises the annual Mosaic Top 5 Pinot Noir Wine Awards. These awards identify five South African Pinot Noir red wines to serve as a benchmark for the development of distinctive South African Pinot Noir red wines and to illustrate the quality of South African Pinot Noir red wines to the world.

<https://pinotnoir.co.za> | [info@pinotnoir.co.za](mailto:info@pinotnoir.co.za)

## Mosaic Family Office

Mosaic Family Office is proud to recognise and support the climate, people, soil, and the multitude of other factors that go into making the best Pinot Noir red wines in South Africa.

Mosaic Family Office is the leading South African family office specialist and specialises in the establishment and maintenance of local and offshore financial inheritance structures that allow families to manage, protect and grow their wealth for current and future generations. Core competencies include administration, fiduciary, foreign exchange, investment management, philanthropy, structuring and taxation services.

Mosaic Family Office is a registered financial services provider #46319.

[www.mosaic.co.za](http://www.mosaic.co.za) | [family.office@mosaic.co.za](mailto:family.office@mosaic.co.za)

TOP 5



The Mosaic Top 5 Pinot  
Noir Wine Awards is the  
most influential wine  
competition in support of  
South African Pinot Noir.

TOP 5



He who knows how to taste does  
not drink wine but savours secrets.

Salvador Dalí

Spanish surrealist artist

# Trustee Report

## Introduction

Top Five Trust is tremendously proud to announce the winners of the 2023 edition of the Mosaic Top 5 Pinot Noir Wine Awards.

## Judging process

The judging process adheres to strict blind tasting standards as the wines are tasted in order from oldest to the youngest. Scores are awarded according to the 100-point scale.

The judging panel consists of members made up of Cape Wine Masters, experienced sommeliers, industry professionals, Masters of Wine and qualified winemakers only. One panel member is appointed as chairperson.

The judging panel for this year's competition was:

### Chairperson

Dr Winifred Bowman, CWM                      Cape Wine Master and renowned international wine judge

### Panel members

(In alphabetical order)

Fiona McDonald                                  Editor of Cheers Magazine and international wine judge

Gregory Mutambe                                Head sommelier at the Twelve Apostles Hotel

André van Rensburg                            Winemaker at André van Rensburg Wines

Anton Swarts, CWM                            Cape Wine Master and senior winemaker at Spier Wines

Congratulations to the top five winners as well as all the wines awarded 90+ status. We are most grateful to all these producers for crafting Pinot Noir red wines of such high quality.

Sincerely,

**Board of Trustees of Top Five Trust**

# Chairperson Report

In its fourth edition, the Mosaic Top 5 Pinot Noir Wine Awards, an exciting South African wine competition exclusively focused on Pinot Noir red wines, proudly announces the winners of its 2023 awards.

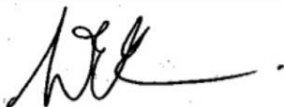
All the wines were judged blindly (pre-poured and then presented to the judges) and scored on a 100-point system. The final score for each wine was recorded after a panel discussion, rather than a simple mathematical average.

The competition took place on August 8th in Cape Town and featured 45 entries from 30 producers, encompassing wines from the 2017 to 2022 vintages. Most entries hailed from the Hemel-en-Aarde area in Walker Bay (19), followed by Elgin (9), Franschhoek (7), and the remainder from Stellenbosch, South Coast, Ceres, and Durbanville.

Pinot Noir plantings in South Africa have risen to 3.49% of the red wine varieties, with approximately 4.2 million vines (1201ha) in the ground, accounting for 1.57% of the national vineyard. The panel observed an improvement in the quality of the wines on the table. Globally, Pinot Noir is the seventh most planted red wine variety. The judges unanimously agreed that year-on-year improvements have occurred in the placement of vineyards, the gentler handling of fruit in the cellar, and the better application of oak to preserve the inherent perfume, fruit flavours, and delicacy expected from quality Pinot Noir. A special mention must be made of precise oak management - there were very few examples where oak dominated the wines, thus preserving the typicity of the grape variety. The 2021 vintage had the most representation with 18 wines, followed by 2022 (15), 2020 (7), and the remaining spread among older vintages. The panel was most impressed by the 2020, 2021, and 2022 vintages. The standout areas were Elgin, contributing 2 of the Top 5 wines, followed by Hemel-en-Aarde. Newcomers Stellenbosch and Ceres Plato filled the remaining three spots, confirming the exceptional quality grapes produced in these cooler regions. Elgin took the lead in 2023, closely challenged by the cool Ceres Plato and high-lying vineyards in the Stellenbosch Bottelary Hills. In the 90+ category, 9 wines originated from the Elgin area, 6 from Hemel-en-Aarde in Walker Bay, and the rest from Stellenbosch, Franschhoek, Durbanville, and Ceres Plateau. It was also delightful to witness consistency in the performance of previous top winners, as well as the introduction of exciting and interesting newcomers.

I extend my gratitude to the panel for their rigor and dedication, and to Mrs. Celia Gilloway for her professional management of the competition logistics and the Top Five Trust.

Congratulations to all the winners!



**Dr. Winifred Bowman, CWM**

Chairperson of the judging panel



# Mosaic Top 5 Winners

(In alphabetical order)

The 2023 top five South African Pinot Noir wines are:



## Creation Wines

Emily's Pinot Noir

2022



## David Finlayson Wines

Camino Africana Pinot Noir

2022



## Driehoek Wines

Pinot Noir

2020



## La Vierge Wines

Apogée Pinot Noir

2020



## Lothian Of Elgin

Pinot Noir

2020



2023

# Medals of Excellence

(In alphabetical order)

Wines that score 90 or more points, but do not make it into the top five, are celebrated with a 90+ award.

The 2023 90+ South African Pinot Noir red wines are:



**Benguela Cove Estate** Pinot Noir 2022

**Botanica Wines** Mary Delany Collection Pinot Noir 2022

**Bottega Family Wine** Misty Lake Pinot Noir 2019

**Chamonix Wine Estate** Reserve Pinot Noir 2022

**David Finlayson Wines** Pinot Noir 2022

**De Grendel Wines** Op die Berg Pinot Noir 2021

**Die Kat se Snor** Pinot Noir 2020

**Domaine Des Dieux** Josephine Pinot Noir 2017

**Driehoek Wines** Mieke Pinot Noir 2021

**Elgin Vintners** Ponthuis Pinot Noir 2021

**Flagstone Wines** Fiona Pinot Noir 2021

**Hasher Family Estate** Ernest Pinot Noir 2022

**Highlands Road** Pinot Noir 2021

**Highlands Road** Pinot Noir 2020

**Richard Kershaw Wines** The Smuggler's Boot Pinot Noir 2021

**Richard Kershaw Wines** GPS Walker Bay Pinot Noir 2020

**Richard Kershaw Wines** Clonal Selection Elgin Pinot Noir 2021

**Leopards Leap Family Vineyards** Culinaria Pinot Noir 2021

**Lothian Of Elgin** Pinot Noir 2021

**Ntida** Pinot Noir 2021

**Oak Valley Estate** Sounds of Silence Pinot Noir 2022

**Oak Valley Estate** Groenlandberg Pinot Noir 2022

**Terra Loci** Walker Bay Pinot Noir 2022





Top Five Trust | Public benefit organisation, reference number 930068246 | <https://pinotnoir.co.za> | [info@pinotnoir.co.za](mailto:info@pinotnoir.co.za)

